

The Commoner

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Supreme Court Delays

The delay of the Supreme Court in deciding the case testing the constitutionality of the Farm Loan Bank law focuses attention on a situation no longer bearable. Many months ago a group of interested parties brought suit to test the validity of the law establishing the Farm Loan Bank. The Farm Bank interfered with interest rates and commissions of the banks and insurance companies, and the suit suspended competition. They have already profited, but they have brought an enormous loss to the farmers. The suit ought to have been heard and decided at once. Every day's delay has cost the farmers hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars, while it has enabled banks and insurance companies to raise interest rates and commissions.

Remedies are never applied until suffering compels action. The farmers have suffered enough to justify a demand for legislation giving to such cases an immediate hearing and requiring the court to render a decision within a reasonable time.

If the federal Farm Loan Bank act is unconstitutional, congress and the people can remedy the defect. If the act is constitutional, unreasonable delays are exasperating and very harmful. It is to be regretted that the Supreme Court docket is so choked with business, but provision should be made so that cases of great public importance could be determined without delay.

Where a few having a pecuniary interest adverse to the interests of a multitude attempt to invalidate a law, the law ought not be suspended during the hearing unless the complainants protect from loss those who may suffer while the case is being heard. Here is an opportunity for senators and members of the house to render a real and permanent service to their constituents.

W. J. BRYAN.

HOUSTON ENTIRELY WRONG

Secretary Houston's recommendations as to changes in the revenue law are extremely disappointing. They are so unwise and so undemocratic that one wonders what evil adviser has imposed on him. As Congressman Kitchen, leader of the Democratic minority in the house, very properly points out, it is the special duty of the House to suggest what articles should be taxed and how much in order to meet the government's estimates of its requirements. But the secretary not only assumes to advise congress as to the items of the revenue law but urges a reduction in the taxes on the rich while he asks for an increase in the taxes on the smaller incomes. The repeal of the excess profits tax would be inexcusable—the profit has already been collected by the profiteers. A repeal of the tax would be an enormous gift to them while their victims would have to make up the deficit caused by the repeal of that tax. He even proposed to remove the two thousand dollar exemption and

Get Right—Then Go Ahead

In the November issue of *The Commoner* we stated that the best way to build up the Democratic party and to make it a power for good was to declare for a set of principles that represented the aspirations of the people morally and politically, and then organize around those principles with leaders who could command the confidence and support of the masses of the people. In other words, **DESERVE TO WIN—THEN ORGANIZE.**

It is absurd to talk about having a professional organizer to organize all the elements claiming to be Democrats into one working force. That plan was tried in the recent campaign, but the public refused to be organized.

The Democratic National committee spent one and a half million dollars trying to get the moral element of the country, including the women, to ride in the Democratic campaign wagon after the liquor element had pre-empted the front seats at San Francisco. The election results indicate that seven or eight million Democrats preferred to walk, and some of those walking never reached the polls in time to vote at the November election.

The suggestion to adopt a national legislative program, a state legislative program and a municipal legislative program that would provide legislative remedies to correct governmental abuses, provide means to curb the profiteer, and promote the peace and prosperity of the great masses of the people, has created a wide interest and met with the enthusiastic approval of a great many people who have volunteered their support of such a plan.

Following the overwhelming defeat of the Democratic party in 1894 on account of its subserviency to Wall Street interests, the Democrats of Nebraska met and adopted a progressive legislative program, and then commenced an

tax every income however small. The cost of collecting increases in percentage as the income decreases and it is doubtful whether the tax collected on incomes under two thousand would be sufficient to pay the cost of collection, not to speak of the injustice that would be done or to take into account the unnecessary annoyance such a tax would cause. The proposed increase of two per cent on incomes under \$5,000 would be fifty per cent increase and the same percentage of increase is recommended on incomes between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

To make such an increase on the smaller incomes and at the same time decrease the rate of the large incomes would be an outrage that even a Republican congress would hardly dare to perpetrate. The Democrats in congress will grievously disappoint their constituents if they do not unitedly oppose the secretary's recommendations.

W. J. BRYAN.

educational and reorganization campaign to secure the enactment of it into the law of the land.

Under the leadership of the Nebraska Democracy that progressive legislative program was written into the national Democratic platforms for sixteen years, and a continuous educational campaign was kept up by Mr. Bryan all those years in favor of the remedial provisions of that platform.

That platform was embodied in the Baltimore platform, and a Democratic congress and a Democratic president were elected pledged to that platform. During the four years that followed, the pledges of that platform were redeemed, and they constitute more achievement in the way of progressive legislation in behalf of the masses during that four years than was ever enacted during any twenty-five years of the country's history. Since that legislative program was completed, no legislative program that appealed to the masses has been suggested, no leadership has appealed to the people in their own behalf, and no set of Democratic principles has been promulgated that met the needs of the masses.

The candidates who desired the Democratic nomination for President in the recent primaries announced no legislative program for the consideration of the public. After the friends of the prospective candidates met in convention at San Francisco they joined together and voted down all the platform suggestions that would commit the candidate or the party to specific legislative remedies that the people were demanding. The election result was inevitable—**SUNK WITHOUT TRACE.**

The Democratic party can again be made to serve a great purpose; it can again be restored to the confidence of the people and made the means of bringing them into the control of the government and restoring the people's rule.

When the organization of the party commences, the rank and file of the party will want to know **WHY** it is being organized, **WHO** is organizing it and **WHAT** it is going to do after it is organized. **GET RIGHT—THEN GO AHEAD.**

Before organization is commenced the policy of the party should be set forth—a platform or legislative program should be submitted for the consideration and approval of the masses who are looking to the Democratic party for relief. The *Commoner* desires suggestions from the progressive, thinking people of the country as to what the Democratic platform should contain. We desire to secure a consensus of opinion as to the needs, ambitions and aspirations of the people. The suggestions may be for either the national, state or municipal program.

The *Commoner* hopes by the next issue to submit a legislative program representing as nearly as possible the desires of the people. We will then call on the public to organize around a set of principles or program; to pledge all those who believe in the principles to work for their endorsement at municipal, county, state and national conventions, and to nominate candidates who are pledged to work for and vote for the enactment of such a program into law.